

Bilirakis Leads Congressional Effort in Fight Against Terrorism

Washington, DC (September 27, 2012) – Congressman Gus Bilirakis (FL-09), member of the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman of the Congressional Hellenic-Israeli Alliance and member of the Congressional Anti-Terrorism Caucus, today sent a letter to the President and Ministers of the Commission of the European Union, urging the Commission to include Hezbollah on the European Union's list of terrorist organizations. Bilirakis led the bi-partisan effort in conjunction with Congressmen Ted Deutch (D-FL), Mike Kelly (R-PA), Steve Israel (D-NY) and Albio Sires (D-NJ).

"In light of Hezbollah's deliberate use of terror across the globe, I proudly joined my colleagues today to call on the European Union to once and for all declare Hezbollah a terrorist organization," Bilirakis said. "Iran and Syria have armed, financed and trained Hezbollah for decades, and the organization is repaying these favors in support of Assad's murderous attacks on its own people. Its use of suicide bombing against military targets and innocent civilians can no longer be tolerated. By branding Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, we hope to weaken its support, eventually rendering the organization obsolete, and ultimately, furthering the fight against terrorism."

The letter, which includes 268 Congressional cosigners (158 Republicans, 110 Democrats), points to Hezbollah's recent involvement in terror attacks across the globe, many of which are on European soil, as well as the organization's long history of international terrorism and links to the Assad Regime and its brutal crackdown against the Syrian people.

The U.S. Department of State designated Hezbollah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) when the label was established under the U.S. Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. Groups designated as FTOs immediately have their assets frozen and support of the group is criminalized.

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#) .